

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 DHA-02

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P R 021504Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8084

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 5546

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS, US

SUBJECT: FIRST REACTIONS TO INITIALING OF INTERIM
AGREEMENT

BEGIN SUMMARY

PRELIMINARY PUBLIC REACTION IN ISRAEL TO INTERIM
AGREEMENT HAS BEEN QUALIFIED, WEARY SATISFACTION.
GOVERNMENT AND OFFICIAL ESTABLISHMENT HAVE BEEN
WORKING HARD TO PUT MOST POSITIVE INTERPRETATION
POSSIBLE ON AGREEMENT AFTER A SLOW START.
CENTER AND LEFT OF POLITICAL SPECTRUM WHICH HAVE
SUPPORTED GOVERNMENT EFFORTS THROUGHOUT NEGOTIATIONS
AND THEIR PRELIMINARIES HAVE BEEN MOST UPBEAT,
WHILE LIKUD AND SOME MORE HAWKISH MAPAI MEMBERS
(LIKE POLICE MINISTER HILLEL) HAVE BEEN OPPOSING IT
IN VARYING DEGREE. CHARACTERISTIC RESPONSE WAS
GOLDA MEIR WHO SAID SHE SUPPORTED AGREEMENT AND
WOULD VOTE FOR IT AT LABOR PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE
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MEETING SEPT. 2. AT THE SAME TIME SHE
REMARKED AGREEMENT SHOULD BE ACCEPTED IN ITS PROPER
PROPORTIONS - NEITHER WITH ACCLAIM OR FEELINGS
OF SORROW - SINCE IT COMPRISES NEITHER SALVATION

NOR DESTRUCTION OF STATE. END SUMMARY.

1. NOT SURPRISINGLY, POLITICAL REACTIONS FOLLOWING INITIALING OF AGREEMENT WERE VERY MUCH IN LINE WITH POSITIONS OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND FACTIONS BEFOREHAND. ON EXTREME RIGHT COMPLETE LAND OF ISRAEL MOVEMENT WARNED THAT "DETERIORATION IN ISRAELI POSITION CONTINUED DURING LAST STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS" AND CALLED ON KNESSET MEMBERS TO PREVENT APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT IN KNESSET. OPPOSITION LIKUD HAD ALREADY DECIDED TO OPPOSE AGREEMENT IN KNESSET AND ITS LEADER BEGIN SAID SEPT 1 THAT THE NEW INTERIM AGREEMENT WOULD BRING ABOUT ONLY A FEW MONTHS OF POLITICAL CEASEFIRE, "AND THE PRESSURES FOR FURTHER ISRAELI WITHDRAWALS WILL BE RESUMED..."

2. ALTHOUGH OFFICIAL POSITIONS OF LABOR PARTY, NRP AND ILP WILL BE DETERMINED TODAY, THEIR DECISION TO GIVE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT TO AGREEMENT IS THOUGHT TO BE CERTAIN. ONLY A HANDFUL OF LABOR PARTY MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO OPPOSE AGREEMENT. POLICE MINISTER HILLEL, OF COURSE, HAS ALREADY EXPRESSED CONCERN AND DAYAN HAS PUBLICLY OPPOSED AGREEMENT. BUT THEY ARE SMALL MINORITY. LEFT WING OF ALIGNMENT WILL STRONGLY SUPPORT AGREEMENT AND EVEN NEW LEFT WING PARTY YAAD, WHICH HAD DOUBTS ABOUT INTERIM AGREEMENT (IT WAS IN FAVOR OF EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE OVERALL PEACE SETTLEMENT), HAS REPORTEDLY DECIDED TO LEND ITS SUPPORT IN KNESSET.

3. PRESS AND OTHER MEDIA HAVE CARRIED EXTENSIVE REPORTS BRINGING VIEWS OF "OBJECTIVE" EXPERTS SUCH AS UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS AND MILITARY COMMENTATORS. ALTHOUGH THERE ARE DIVIDED VIEWS AS TO ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF AGREEMENT, UNCLASSIFIED

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WEIGHT OF "EXPERT" OPINION SEEMS TO BE IN FAVOR. GENERAL (RES) URI BEN-ARI APPEARING IN A PRIME-TIME TV NEWS PROGRAM PRAISED THE MILITARY ADVANTAGES WHICH THE NEW AGREEMENT GIVES ISRAEL. HIS ARGUMENT WAS BASED ON 3 MAIN POINTS: THE NEW LINE WILL PROVIDE ISRAEL WITH AN ADEQUATE EARLY WARNING SYSTEM AND WILL RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A SURPRISE ATTACK; THE NEW LINE WILL CREATE THE POSSIBILITY OF CONDUCTING "CLASSIC ARMOR BATTLES" IN OPEN SPACES, AS IN THE SIX-DAY WAR; THE NEW LINE WILL FORCE THE EGYPTIAN TO COME OUT OF THE "MISSILE UMBRELLA" CHIEF OF STAFF GUR ALSO LISTED THE NEW LINES ADVANTAGES.

ALONG SIMILAR LINES, HEAD OF JEWISH AGENCY
ABSORPTION DEPARTMENT GENERAL (RES.) NARKIS SAID
THAT THE NEW AGREEMENT MAY BRING ABOUT AN INCREASE
IN IMMIGRATION SINCE THE SECURITY SITUATION IS
ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS FOR THE DECLINE IN
IMMIGRATION.

COMMENT: KNESSET DEBATE ON SEPT 3 WILL, OF COURSE, PROVIDE
AN ACCURATE REFLECTION OF REACTION TO INTERIM
AGREEMENT ACROSS POLITICAL SPECTRUM.
TOON

UNCLASSIFIED

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